

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND**

CM/ECF FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Login and Password

Question: I am admitted to both Rhode Island and Massachusetts and am uncertain whether I need two separate ECF passwords or only one. Could you advise me?

Answer: You will need a separate ECF login and password for each court in which you practice, as ECF registration is court specific.

Question: Can a secretary or paralegal be authorized to file on behalf of more than one attorney?

Answer: Yes, as long as the secretary or paralegal uses the correct login and password. The login and password must match the electronic signature.

Equipment

Question: Do I have to have a document scanner to use ECF?

Answer: Yes. Any document that was not created in your word processor must be scanned and converted into PDF. For instance, any exhibit you have not created must be scanned. Also, this Court requires original signatures on affidavits. Those documents must be scanned and converted to PDF.

Format

Question: Is there a DPI limit on scanned documents?

Answer: No, but there is 2.5 megabyte (MB) limit on file size. We recommend a scanner DPI setting of 150 or less to keep the PDF file size as small as possible.

Question: What is the number of pages equivalent to 2.5 megabyte (MB)?

Answer: 2.5 MB is the equivalent of 50 pages of a Scanned PDF document or 650 pages of an Electronically Converted PDF document.

Portable Document Filing

Question: Will ECF accept PDF documents with added security settings that

prohibit changes to be made to the documents?

Answer: No, ECF will not accept PDF documents with added security settings of any type.

Filing

Question: I cannot find the appropriate event to use when filing my document electronically. What should I do?

Answer: If you cannot find an event which you feel best describes the document you are filing, CALL the Clerk's Office Help Desk at (401) 752-7100 for guidance. It is very possible the document you are trying to file electronically should be filed conventionally.

Question: I am in the middle of filing a document and feel I may have made a mistake - what do I do?

Answer: By all means, call the Clerk's Office Help Desk at (401) 752-7100 before submitting the document. You can also click on the "back" button or you can even start over again. *As long as you have not gone past the preview page to the NEF (in which case the document has been filed), you can undo any mistakes you feel may have made. Do not hesitate to call the Clerk's Office Help Desk with any questions. Someone will be more than happy to walk you through your filing.

Question: How do I file a motion in a case that I have not entered my appearance in?

Answer: An attorney who wishes to file a motion on behalf of a client who is a non-party to a case may electronically file on behalf of their client by adding the party at the screen "Select Filer." Click on "Add/Create Party" to the right of the list of parties. Insert the last name of the party in the text box and click "Next." If your party's name is not listed in the "Party Search Results" box, click on "Create New Party." The party should be added as a movant. Be sure to change the party role from the default role of defendant to movant. Click the down arrow and scroll to "movant", highlight and click "submit." Once you have added the party, you will once again get the "select filer" screen - at this time, highlight your party and click "Next." You will now be asked to associate yourself with this party. Click the box in front of the party's name, click "Lead" and click "Next."

Question: May I sign my document with my hand-written signature and then scan the document to be filed electronically in a scanned PDF format?

Answer: The Administrative Order 2006-01 adopting the Administrative Procedures specifically states that all papers shall be filed and served electronically as required by the Administrative Procedures. Administrative Procedure 9(a) states a signature, for purposes of the Federal Rules is the attorney's login and password as well as the signature block with the /s/ preceding the attorney's typed name.

Filings with hand-written signatures that are scanned PDF documents other than those required by the Court (affidavits) are discouraged. The quality of the scanned PDF document vs. the Electronically Converted PDF document is inferior; the document may be difficult to read; and the document becomes larger, therefore, takes longer to download.

Question: Why don't I always receive an instantaneous email after I have filed a document electronically?

Answer: You should receive an email almost immediately. At times, the system might be a bit slower than other times depending on how many NEFs are going out in that time period. The NEF you receive at the end of your electronic filing is verification that the electronic filing was completed. You should not re-file your document if you do not receive the email instantaneously. You will get it within moments. If you have any doubt as to the success of your filing, call the Clerk's Office Help Desk at (401) 752-7100.

Question: How do I file a document that requires more than one signature, such as a stipulation of dismissal?

Answer: The Administrative Procedures for Electronic Case Filing state that the document must list the names of the other signatories by means of a "/s/" and the typed name of each signatory. By submitting such a document, the filing attorney is certifying that each of the signatories has expressly agreed to the form and substance of the document and given the filing attorney their authority to file the document electronically.

Question: I am filing a stipulation. Who do I pick as a filer?

Answer: Anytime one attorney is filing on behalf of opposing counsel (stipulations, joint motions), all parties affected by the filing should be selected as the filer.

Question: How do I file discovery?

Answer: Discovery should not be filed with the Court - hence- should not be

electronically filed through ECF.

Affidavits

Question: Must I scan affidavits so that when I file it in ECF the Court has the original signatures?

Answer: Yes, according to our Administrative Procedure 4(b)(3) affidavits must be filed in a scanned PDF format.

Response Deadline

Question: If the deadline response date falls on a weekend, what is the actual deadline?

Answer: The deadline will be on the following Monday. This is not different than how we already calculate deadlines. Note: If a judge allows additional time for responses, the Clerk's Office will update the response deadlines in the case.

Pro Hac Vice Motions

Question: Can I file a motion to appear pro hac vice electronically? If so, how do I pay the fee?

Answer: Yes, you may file the motion electronically. Once the motion is filed, you will have three (3) days to send the check in. The check should be made payable to "Board of Bar Examiners" and the check should indicate the case number and name of the attorney seeking admission.

If the fee is not paid in a timely manner, the motion will be referred to a magistrate judge to be returned to the filer for non-compliance.

Certificate of Service

Question: How do I file a certificate of service?

Answer: A certificate of service should be filed as the last page of the main document.

Question: I am filing a certificate of service. How do I find out who is getting electronic notification and who will need traditional paper notification?

Answer: Mailing information for a case may be obtained via the Utilities menu in the ECF system (Utilities, Mailings, Mailing Info for a Case).

Privacy Policy

Question: How do I file a document that requires a full personal identifier?

Answer: If it is determined that you must include a full personal identifier, electronically file a redacted version of the document, and conventionally file the unredacted version along with a motion to seal.

Text Orders

Question: What is a text order?

Answer: A Text Order is a “paperless order” docket entry used to rule on routine matters. A Text Order essentially replaces “margin” orders entered on the face of a motion. Notice of such an order is through the NEF. A Text Order does not have a document attached. Text Orders are authorized by our Administrative Procedures and have the same force and effect as if the judge or clerk had signed a paper copy of the order.

Attachments/Exhibits

Question: Can I file multiple exhibits as one attachment?

Answer: Yes, as long as the attachment does not exceed 2.5 megabyte (MB). For the ease of the court, we recommend that each exhibit be filed as an individual attachment.

Question: How do I file exhibits?

Answer: Exhibits should be filed as attachments to the motion and memo or the response and memo. Exhibits should not be filed as a separate entry.

“Free Look”

Question: How long does my free look last?

Answer: The free look you get with your NEF is only available for 15 days.

Question: Does “one free look” apply to attachments?

Answer: Yes. Effective 12/16/04 one free look applies to all attachments.

Question: After viewing the Main Document, how do I get my free look at the attachments, without using PACER?

Answer: Open the Main Document with your PDF software. Once the Main Document appears and you have printed or saved the document, do not close the PDF software or you will have lost the opportunity to have a free look at the attachments. Instead, click on the Back Button that is located on your browser tool bar. This will allow you to go back to the remaining hyperlinks that are attached to your Main Document.

Notice of Electronic Filing

Question: How do you save a NEF?

Answer: You can save the original NEF by using the “copy and paste” method into your word processor and then giving it a file name; or

You can use the “File, Save as” method when you open the e-mailed NEF - this method is a little quicker; or

Finally, when you get the e-mailed NEF, you can just drag it into a folder in your e-mail manager. This is the fastest way to save a NEF.

Training:

Question: Can I attend more than one training session?

Answer: Yes, you can attend as many as you feel you need.